DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 088 PS 014 664

AUTHOR Patterson, Ross
TITLE A Father's Role in His Child's Development. Unit for Child Studies. Selected Papers Number 20.
INSTITUTION New South Wales Univ., Kensington (Australia). School of Education.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Rearing; Cultural Influences; *Family Life; Family Relationship; *Fathers; Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); *History; *Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Role; Self Concept
IDENTIFIERS Australia (New South Wales)

ABSTRACT

By considering three historical stages of the father's role in the development of his child (father of the past, present, and future), one may perceive a pattern. The father of the past had a clearly defined role; however, this role did not take into account the emotional well-being of family members. Consequently, all in the family lost out, especially the mother and child. The father of the present evolved from social changes that struck at the power hold the father of the past had over his family and gave the mother much more self-determination. However, the present-day father has become confused about his role. Certainly, the child continues to lose out if the father of the present is not sure where he fits in. The father of the future has a choice. He can become a total nonentity with no role in the development of his child, or he can invest more of himself in the family on an equal basis, insure that all members' needs are adequately met, and become an important contributor to the development of his child. Finding the father a special area to take over (e.g., supervisor of the child's sex-role development or socialization, head of the household, or disciplinarian) will not help. The father certainly needs a definition of his role, but the role should give him the opportunity to fully share in all aspects of his child's growth. (RH)

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Selected Papers

Unit for Child Studies

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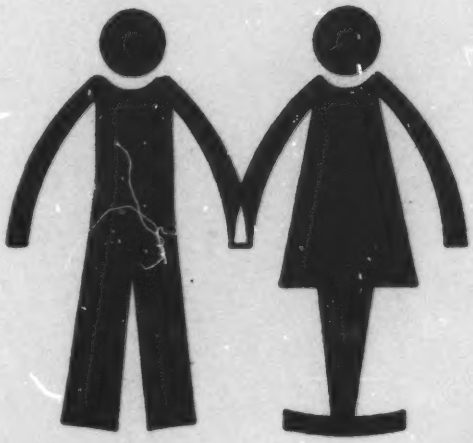

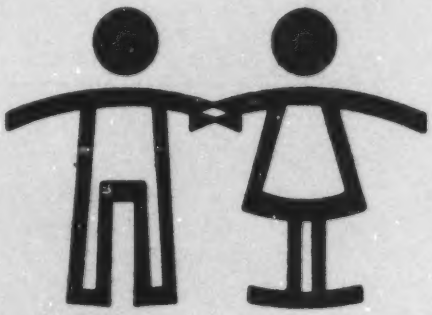

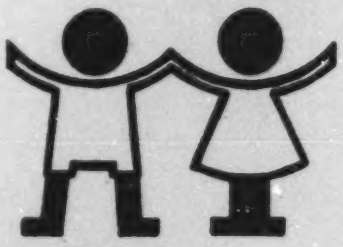

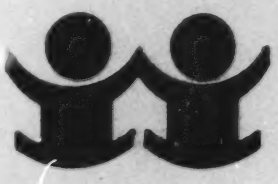

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A FATHER'S ROLE IN HIS CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

ROSS PATTERSON
GROUP THERAPIST

ISBN 0727-9824

A FATHER'S ROLE IN HIS CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

Ross Patterson *Group Therapist*

INTRODUCTION

From the time serious consideration began to be given to families, child development and the parent/child interaction, the father's role in the early and crucial development of his children has, for the most part, been ignored, with primary energy focusing on the mother/child relationship. Attention has been directed to father absence or father/son relationships but rarely on interactive variables between father and child in the first months and years of life. Pioneers in work of attachment and separation in children, such as Bowlby (1969, 1973), for example, emphasized the unique importance of the mother in the child's early life with little reference to the father's importance other than in a supportive or helping manner. This state of affairs was no doubt reinforced by the assumption that because mother was the one who spent the most time with the child it was her interaction that was of prime importance.

Recently, however, there has been a spark of enthusiasm in the study of the father's role with his children. Ironically, this has not come about as a result of serious soul searching on behalf of the research world, but, as Biller states: "A growing awareness of the prevalence of fatherless families and the social, economic and psychological problems that such families encounter." (Biller, 1971, p 1). Such enthusiasm has recently seen the publication of quite extensive reviews (Popplewell & Sheikh, 1980; Henderson, 1980; Lamb, 1981), devoted to the subject of father and his role in child development.

Rather than concentrate on issues such as father and sex role developement, father absence or father's effects of cognitive development specifically, this paper will present a father's role in his child's development in three stages: Father of the Past, Father of the Present and Father of the Future. The paper will concentrate largely on father in western society and his role with young children. Within these three concepts fathering will be looked at in three levels as proposed by Sawin (1977): *(a)* role expectations in a given culture or society at a particular point in history; *(b)* father's concepts of themselves as fathers, i.e., the father's "cognitions and feelings about himself and how he wants to be as a father"; and *(c)* how fathers actually behave toward other members of the family.

FATHER OF THE PAST

The father of the past (and by "past" I mean prior to the mid-twentieth century) in the western world can probably be best summed up as Jan Harper (1980) has done in her book, *Fathers at Home*, comparing him to the Heavenly Father: "He is Procreator (Creator), Commander (They will be done), Protector and Defender (Deliver us from evil), Disciplinarian (Forgive us our

trespasses), Bountiful provider (Give us this day our daily bread), and Moral supervisor (Lead us not into temptation)." (p 118). In fact, as one can glean from the quote, father of the past had a role that was specific, defined and very, very structured.

Outside the Family

The father of the past was judged in his successful role not by his involvement within the family but by his and his family's outward appearance. For this reason father became the focus of the family's survival. A family's prestige, health, well being and community acceptance came through the father. If he was in work then the family ate, was accepted by the community, remained healthy. However, as Maureen Green (1976) points out in her book, *Fathering*, if the father died, lost his prestigious existence or deserted his family then it was the family or, more to the point, the wife who suffered: "A woman was Mrs. Smith, the merchant's wife, or Miss Smith, the merchant's daughter, or she was nothing." (Green, 1976, p 3).

Since father was in such a powerful role outside the family, he became the purveyor of social and moral expectations to his family as well. He has been described as the "lone explorer" (Green, 1976) into the outside world bringing home news of its functioning, and advice as to how one should behave if one was to be accepted by the society. The mother and children were reduced to a position of subordination, accepting his decisions, views, discipline and attitudes - or to sum it up, his power - without question. To fully understand why such a powerful hold was instigated on a family by the father, such that the family could not do without him, it is necessary to briefly look at where the concept of father being responsible for his family comes from.

Prior to the Reformation of the Seventeenth Century, the leadership of the family was entrusted to the Lord of the Manor or the priest in the church (Schorsch, 1979). This was not such a mammoth task since it was not the individual needs of each family that was catered for. In fact, the idea of privacy or individuality, if not completely unknown, was impossible since the household, within these village settings, may have held anything up to thirty to forty people. As Lawrence Stone describes it, "It was a community in which all the members lived in a perpetual crowd." (Stone, 1977).

Once the Reformation came, the responsibilities of family management fell to the father. Along with this responsibility came power, the power to impart the "good life" (Schorsch, 1979) to his family. This involved praying for and with the family, preaching the spiritual mores of the time, providing for and protecting his family. As Anita Schorsch states: "In his new role he became the embodiment of power and of benevolence"(p 18). Once held, there was little chance that father would relinquish this power.

Inherent within this power was the need to prove paternity and to insure that such power did not fade. It became, and still is common within some societies, to pass on all inheritance to the male offspring. So important was/ is the proof of paternity that in a number of European countries, including France and Italy, it is law that the illegitimate child can be entered into the birth registers as the son of a particular father with mother unknown (Green, 1976, p 14).

It is not surprising, with this historical perspective, that father controlled if not suppressed his family ensuring the continuance of his domination, his progress and the success of his society (from his eyes at least). Father of the past could almost be accused of overkill in his determination to show he was necessary. This may also reflect a previous awareness of the fragility of his position. As Margaret Mead once stated: "Human fatherhood is

a social invention. Men have to learn to want to provide for others and this behaviour being learned is rather fragile and can disappear rather easily under social conditions that no longer teach it effectively." (Mead, 1953).

A Good Father

Following on to the second level of Sawin's hypothesis it is important to look at how successful the father of the past thought himself to be. Since the existence of the family was totally dependent upon the father providing for its needs, it is reasonable to assume that not only was the position of the family judged upon the success, or observed success, of the father but that, in turn, "a good father" was measured by such things as health, dress, behaviour, accommodation, furnishing, observed within the family. Needless to say, such success in fathering is measured by observable, functional and material well-being with little energy expended looking at the emotional well-being of mother and children.

Fathers, no doubt, felt that they were being good fathers (a very positive self image) in the past since the more time they spent in attainment of material wealth the better off the family looked. The process, as mentioned, was one of passing on "the good life" to the family and the father of the past was not unarmed in his attempts to do this. To aid father in the early eighteenth century were manuals with such "warm" titles as, "A Godly Form of Household Government", "A Teacher of Household", "How to Teach Household", and not forgetting "Of Domestical Duties", religious guides to the management of a family (Schorsch, 1979). Such titles reflect how "in charge" father was expected to be.

More recently, expectations that the father should teach household duties to the family have probably lessened, replaced with an increasing demand (within the father himself) to become more involved in two areas: *(a)* the pursuit of further material gains and *(b)* disciplining the children. The importance of the disciplinary function within father's role can be seen by the fact that, historically, punitive and harsh punishment has been a consistent aspect of the father/child role (De Mause, 1975). Even in our present society father's disciplinary input is still seen as an important aspect. The majority of Melbourne parents in a study conducted by Lyn Richards described a Good Father in terms of discipline (Richards, 1978, p 219).

One would like to believe that the pursuit of material wealth as a measure of being a good father is becoming antiquated. However, Warren Farrell in *The Liberated Man* states: "Many men believe that their devotion to the job will bring them love but find that it has, instead, alienated them from those they love. This situation embitters many men since they have invested their lives and status in something they believed would bring affection." (Farrell, 1975, p 12). Success had more to do with external family achievements (material wealth, obedience, good behaviour in public, accommodation, etc.), rather than internal family achievements (cohesiveness, bonding, trust, a positive self image all round, etc.).

Inside the Family

So what were some of the effects on the family produced directly or indirectly by this conception of the role of the father in the development of his children? The image that has been constructed here gives a picture of a father who was not directly involved in the development of his children other than his socializing role, especially in terms of discipline. The image is also one that one would expect belongs to the Victorian era. However, many of the concepts, ideas and beliefs accredited to the father of the past re-

main, in some areas deeply entrenched, within the father of the present.

An overall picture of father of the past and his relationship with the family members is not by all accounts a positive one. In fact, it could be argued that all family members lost out due to father's suppressive and powerful nature, including father.

The child lost out under this regime since the point of father's existence within the family was to impose a code of behaviour upon the child without reference to the child's needs, limitations (in terms of developmental ability), or aspirations. In a sense, father was there to mould the child by any means. The result was one of establishing distance between father and children. Children's perceptions of father are one way of examining this distancing. The results of a number of studies during the 1960's into children's perception of their fathers are summarized by Walter & Stinnet (1971) as follows:

> *"The studies concerning children's perceptions of parents seem to converge in indicating that children perceive fathers as being more fear arousing, more punitive, more restrictive, colder and less understanding than mothers. Such findings have implications and raise questions concerning the socializations and expectations of the male in our society, particularly as a family member."* (p 125)

The mother, too, lost out emotionally under such a regime since any status she acquired was through her husband. She was someone's wife, someone's mother or someone's daughter: rarely was she accredited an image in her own right. In such a situation the woman was left with little alternative but to accept her position. This acceptance was not prevented by the destruction of relationships between men and women, as Maureen Green points out: "That the need to supervise, control and downgrade the contribution of women embittered the relations between the sexes, seemed, perhaps, a small price to pay." (Green, 1976, p 15).

Father also lost out in such a regime not only due to the results on the children and the wife, but also because of the changes that the role induced in him. This is especially evident in the role of father being the protector of his family (Earls & Yogman, 1978). The image that comes into one's mind when one thinks of a protector is of someone strong, resiliant, someone who can be leaned on in times of trouble and someone who solves the problems presented, i.e., the successful functioning of the family rests with the father.

The inherent problem with always being the leader and protector is twofold:

(a) Firstly, there is no room for the protector to either fail or seek protection. Such behaviour is a sign of weakness. When the protector stands firm and allows his family to lean on him for that protection then a question demands to be asked. Where does the protector go for support? Usually that need for support is suppressed so that the situation arises where anything to do with expression of feelings is seen as unmanly. This was pointed out in Russell's survey of 450 parents. He found that the majority believed that it would seem less masculine in the eyes of others for father to become too involved in the care-giving role (Russell, 1979).

(b) The second problem of the protector has something to do with pride and the fear of reassessing a role. When something does go amiss in a family that the protector is unable to solve (e.g. marital breakdown, sickness in child, abnormality at birth) then the the protector is not likely to seek outside help for this would seem to demonstrate that he was unable to solve his own troubles. If someone else is able to help where he cannot it could become a threat to his image of himself as a father.

Such problems still exist with father of the present. In my experience the problem of the protector is shown in the following way:

(a) Hostility in counselling sessions;
(b) Relatively low use of medical and counselling services;
(c) High father absence rate in families with disabled children.

A protector, by the nature of his role, finds it difficult to seek outside help since in seeking this help he undermines his own self-image as a protector. The result is a loss of a feeling father.

As father of the past is left and father of the present is explored, it is important to remember that some characteristics carry forward. Being somewhat out of touch with feelings is one characteristic that still exists. On father and feelings Farrell (1975) states: "Men cannot help but be either emotionally incompetent (unable to handle emotion expressed by others) or emotionally constipated (unable to express their own emotions) or both." (p 66).

FATHER OF THE PRESENT

To fully understand the father of the present and his contribution and influence on the development of his child, it is necessary to comprehend the social changes that either aided, forced or accelerated the changes in the father's role. In general, the power hold that the father of the past had on his family, thus making his position paramount, has been slowly eroded away. The result is that there is now confusion as to the father's role. Suffice to say, as society has become more democratic, the family, and especially father, has had to become more democratic (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976, Parents' Handbook, p 6).

Social Change

What specific changes, then, brought about a revamp of the father's role? Maureen Green (1976) cites the following as changes leading to a change in the conception of a father's role:

(a) The Women's Liberation Movement. Such a force gave women the chance to finally stand up and be seen as individuals with needs that were legitimate and outside the family.(Women demanded their rights.)
(b) Mother had the right/need to work and aid in the economic wellbeing of the family. (Father is no longer sole provider.)
(c) Recognition dependent on individual achievement rather than on reflected glory from the father/husband. (Father no longer protector and defender.)
(d) Social issues and moral questions are subject to much more debate within and without the family. Access to such information is available to all members of the family. (Father no longer moral supervisor.)

(e) The legal system strives towards equal legislation for man, woman and child. (Father no longer the commander.)
(f) Equality in sexuality is also sought. Women not only took the right to enjoy sex but can also be artificially inseminated if such problems in reproduction are present. (Father no longer Procreator.)

To sum up, therefore, the despotic father of the past apparently has little place in today's society (although his death is a slow one in some areas).

The changes in fatherhood are slow and it has been suggested that fathers are confused as to their role (Green, 1976). My own clinical experience with fathers would support this in that many fathers struggle to determine the amount of time they should devote to a career (maintaining economic security) and the time they should spend on family care (maintaining emotional security). Such confusion is counterproductive to both the father's and the family's adjustment for a number of reasons.

For example, father suffers in his adjustment to family life. Fein (1976) studied men's experiences during the birth of the first child. He found that men with a clearly defined role, be that either of breadwinner or sharer of nurturing, seemed to adjust more easily to life after the child's birth than those who were confused as to their role. For those who are not clear about their role there is sometimes a movement towards safer known roles.

It is not uncommon to hear mourning for what father has lost. There is the suggestion that the sooner fathers are returned to the head of their households, the sooner the crises in families will cease (McDonald, 1977), or a suggestion that fathers are, in fact, disappearing (Green, 1976), or do not have the same vital sense of being necessary (Biller & Meredith, 1974). There is even a suggestion that we have entered a "Matrist" age, a time where mother's view of the world takes precedence (Rattray Taylor, 1973). Until very recently, and perhaps still in some quarters, there is certainly no agreed-upon view that fathers being involved with their families is a good thing. Even as late as 1977 the *Medical Journal of Australia* quoted a prominent gynaecologist as saying in the media: "Women who want their husbands to witness their children's birth are neurotic and need psychiatric help. Most obstetricians do not want husbands in the labour ward. There is no point in discussing the matter with parents to be - by implication the husbands are also neurotic." (Anon., 1973).

With such diverse opinions it is hardly surprising that fathers find themselves disappointed as to their effectiveness within the family as well as their role within the development of their children although research in Australia (Russell, 1982) suggests that it is the mothers who are confused as to their role. However, it is important to look a little closer at Sawin's (1977) second level of father function in terms of father of the present.

The media, it seems, only complicates the view of father by presenting generally ineffectual father figures in both advertising and TV programmes (Harper, 1980, p 119). Advertising campaigns for mothers always present them as coping, happy, warm and bubbly (Patterson, 1981). Fathers too often are presented as bumblefooted, pitiful, ineffectual, almost inconsequential. Unlike the father of the past, not only is the role unclear, confused and undefined, but father of the present's self image is often quite low (Green, 1976, p 10). Since there are few cultural models of highly participant fathers, it has also been suggested that men will not feel comfortable with this role and see it as a threat to their identity as males (Russell & Raidin, to be published).

Father the Contributor

Where then does father make a significant contribution to the development of his child? A number of recent literature reviews all concur on the significance of father in the development of his children (Popplewell & Sheikh, 1981; Lamb, 1981; Henderson, 1980). In relation to the development of his children, information about the father of the present has been obtained by four types of studies (Henderson, 1980):

(a) Studies of people experiencing poor or absent fathering
(b) Direct studies of father/infant/child interaction
(c) Psychoanalytical studies
(d) Personal interaction and data

This paper will look at the first two of these sources of information about father's contributions. There have been attempts to look at the effects of father absences to justify the patriarchal role. Much of it has been carried out in the context of concern with sex stereotyping which is becoming increasingly out-of-date. Within the absent father studies a lot of energy has been given to looking at sex role development. Sixteen years ago Hetherington (1966) studied negro and white boys, half of whom had absent fathers. From her studies she concluded that there was no difference between the father present boys and the father absent boys if separation occurred after six years of age, in that adequate masculine behaviour was observed. This was not observed if separation occurred before six. This work was backed up by Trunnell's hypothesis of father absences (1968). Trunnell suggested: *(a)* that paternal absence has a significant effect upon the development of the child and correlates with the severity of the problem the child is having, *(b)* that the child who suffers the absence during the first five years is more likely to manifest problems, *(c)* that the general environment of the child, the availability of other father figures and the personality of the father have a rather large bearing on the child's ability to deal with the absence of the father. In sum, many of these researchers argued that father absence generally can be detrimental to the social, emotional, intellectual adjustment and development of children. More recent research (Bee, 1978; Shinn, 1978) indicates that the variables in these studies were poorly controlled and that the detrimental effects stemmed from poverty not father absence. The single parent is usually poor and female.

Another criticism of father absent studies and subsequent measurement of masculinity and femininity in the children is that it is very difficult to define masculinity and femininity (Lamb, 1981). In fact it could be argued that if boys of father absent families were found to be "less masculine" they may be more open about their feelings, whereas the girls who are seen to have lost their femininity may be a lot more self-assertive and confident. From the recent research quoted it would seem far more useful to look at the advantages of a present, nurturant father rather than risk the methodological faults that plague attempts to study father absence and its effects. However, Lamb (1981) states that rigorously controlled studies of father absence still show a significant difference between children raised with and without fathers and that such studies "confirm that fathers influence sex roles, morality, achievement, and psycho-social development" (Lamb, 1981, p 30).

Direct studies of father/infant/child have shown specific differences between how infants react to their fathers and their mothers. In stress situations, for example, it has been shown that mothers are slightly preferred (Kotelchuck, 1976). However, this is not to suggest that the child is not strongly attached to the father, but may have more to do with the fact that generally, in these studies, mothers are involved primarily in the caretaking role (Gearing, 1979). Yogman's study of parent/child interaction showed that

infants were responding differently to father than mother by four weeks of age. From this was concluded that the infant may expect different interaction from each parent - a more contained response from the mother, while a more playful response comes from the father. It is here that the importance of the third person is seen in terms of giving the infant an opportunity to respond to someone who is close and nurturing but different from the mother (Henderson, 1980).

Sharing the Experience

Father has a definite role in the intricacies of rearing a child. It is important to try and define what "nurturing father" means, and in that way look at where father aids development of the child. Henderson (1980) suggests that father begins to take an important role in the development process of the child during the mother's pregnancy and child's delivery. Attendances at both preparation for parenthood classes and the birth experience by fathers is up and seems to be increasing. This is especially shown by the fact that in Sydney, specialised preparation for parenthood classes for both father and mother are being offered not only by many hospitals but also by two independent agencies, Parent Centres of Australia and Child Birth Education. Actual numbers of attendances at the birth are a little harder to obtain. Between 1972 - 1974 in a major ACT hospital, father attendance increased from .7% in 1962 to 5% in 1966 to 1.2% in 1971 to 20.2% in 1974 (Alwyn, 1977). More recent work by Russell (1982) suggests an attendance rate of 60 to 80%, although in other countries the participation rate does not seem to be as high (Phillips & Anzalone, 1978).

Father's influence in a positive manner upon the development of the child begins, it would seem, with his relationship with the mother, and to this extent, how involved he believes himself to be in both the pregnancy and childbirth and in the initial settling-in period. It has been shown that if husbands make a conscious effort to establish "courtship behaviour", or romance, togetherness etc., with their wives after the birth of their baby, there is reported greater satisfaction within the marriage (Gilman & Knox, 1976). Father's feelings of bonding are being studied more and more. Early work (Greenberg & Morris, 1974) suggested that fathers had strong feelings for their infants. This belief has been backed up by recent work (see Parkes & Tinsley, 1981, for a comprehensive review). Not only can fathers offer immense support during labour, but they can also experience strong feelings towards their baby upon its birth.

In Australia, however, recent studies by Graeme Russell (1979, 1982), showed that the number of fathers actively involved in the caring of their children is low. So, although there is a suspected high percentage of father attendance at the birth, Russell's study indicates that this involvement falls off dramatically. It is difficult to explain why initial involvement peters out, but two issues may influence it. Firstly, how much the mother "takes over" the role of nurturing the young child, and how much the father is left out in the cold, and secondly, whether the father is still affected by the thought that nurturing is "unmanly", or, possibly, not important for a man.

So where do the fathers become involved in nurturing? Pedersen & Robson (1969) looked at father's paternal behaviour through the use of extensive interviews during home visits to families with eight months old babies, and again when the babies were nine-and-a-half months old. They found eight variables in the exercise of the father's role:

(a) Caretaking (physically looking after the child)
(b) Investment (emotional involvement and positive effect)
(c) Time spent on play (ranged from 45 minutes to 26 hours per week)
(d) Irritability level (father's reaction to babies crying)
(e) Apprehension over well being (not found if the babies are female)
(f) Authoritarian control (disciplining)
(g) Stimulation level of play with baby
(h) Overall availability (ranged from 5 hours to 47 hours per week)

Such a spread points out not only the possible areas of father's involvement with his children, but the confusion that exists as to what is father's role. Pedersen (1979) in recent work distinguishes between two effects of the father, namely, direct (such as those listed above) and mediated through the mother. Generally, fathers are more involved in play with children rather than in the maintenance tasks of child care.

Summarising father of the present, the following issues can be highlighted:

(a) Father of the present is a little confused and disappointed as to his role, that is, how much of himself to devote to nurturing in the family and how much to the contrivance of outside interests/responsibilities, (work, sports, etc.).
(b) Fathers, without doubt, have a significant contribution to make to the development of their children that is different from the mother's contribution.
(c) There seems to be a swing towards the involvement of fathers much more in the development of their children.
(d) Some aspects of father of the past linger, especially in relation to the feelings of the father and the fear of appearing unmanly if nurturing children is undertaken.
(e) There is a need for fathers to cement the role as fathers, such that the needs of the father, mother and child are adequately met and father does not find himself an unwanted or, worse, an unneeded stranger.

FATHER OF THE FUTURE

In General

So where can father move to so that the role he takes in the development of his child is much more enjoyable and rewarding for him and his family? In general, it would seem that a higher investment by the father in the family, in terms of time and energy, is the only positive way in which the father of the future can move (Green, 1976; Goldstein, 1977; Benson, 1968). Although the ways in which he does this are by no means agreed upon, Benson, for example, calls upon fathers to become more involved but argues that the father should participate in areas that are different from the mother's role. Therefore, since they are different people, they should take on different roles. Unfortunately, this once more suggests that the male sex is better suited to one particular role than the female sex. This idea that the male is inherently better at one role (usually socializing the child) while the mother is inherently better at another role (usually caretaking) is challenged by Russell (1979) who states: "Fathers who have a major care giving role adopt a style of interaction which is more similar to that found for mothers in traditional families.".

Taking an equal approach not only means recognising that neither partner is inherently best at the job, but it also means the father recognising that if he wants to become involved he has to do more than just "help out". Help is an interesting word since it really conveys the idea that the major responsibility still sits with the mother, and when things get tough dad will step in and help. If father of the future is to become an equal partner in the job of raising children, then he must be willing to actively share in the development of his child, which is really a state of mind, rather than an equal time sharing. That is, father of the future will become involved because he knows it is right not because of the power of guilt or by force. This, of course, would mean a redefinition of why father is important, although it should also be asked why a special role that only father can fill must be found. The media suggest that some fathers are trying to bond more to their infants. This needs more research as does the possibility that father involvement gives the child a balance both of sexes and interaction should be enough to ensure a position for father. The issue is not whether there is a function for father but whether he wishes to take the job up.

Future Direction

My work with parents (which involves groups focussing on the parent-child relationship) points out three areas fathers of the future must become aware of if their effect on their children's development is to be maximised. These are:

(a) Understanding, accepting and dealing with their own feelings about being a parent as well as feelings they have towards the child;
(b) developing greater trust in their children, and
(c) understanding the developmental stages children are likely to move through as they grow and being able to guide children within these stages.

Generally, parents are not prepared very well for the feelings they are likely to encounter when they become parents (Gribben, 1979; Patterson, 1981) and so it becomes a frightening time when parents recognise the anger they feel towards their children (Gribben, 1979). Part of this feelings concept is encouraging fathers to gain support from their partners, i.e., to be able to express their fears and anxieties about becoming or being fathers without feeling they have let their masculinity slip.

Fathers of the future will need to develop greater trust in children. Cook (1980) has outlined two approaches in the rearing of children; one he calls the "Distrustful Directive Approach", the other he calls "A Trusting Co-operative Approach". It is his belief that too often in western society there is a tendency to distrust the child. That is, from birth parents are warned of particular parent behaviour because it may cause unwanted behaviour in the child through the child manipulating the parent. This is especially shown in the spoiling myth - pick a child up each time he cries and you will spoil him, he will cry just to be picked up.

The major difference between the two approaches is that one is based on control, while the other is based on understanding and guidance. Hopefully, the father of the future will take on the trusting-co-operative approach much more than is happening now. To do this there will need to be dramatic changes, not only in the father's view of himself as disciplinarian since the discipline in the co-operative approach is through guidance and not punitive control, but there will need to be a language change. Through my work with parents, I have noticed a vocabulary used with, and by, the parents

of young children, that highlihts the distrust syndrome. Comments are often made such as: "Is she a good baby?", "Is he good at night?", "Does she play up much?", "Does he demand your attention?", "Ah! She's got you wrapped around her little finger!", "He's cunning!" - all comments being made about a ten weeks old baby. If the distrust approach is set up early in a baby's life, then the decisions regarding long-term disciplining (controlling) are already made. The distrust syndrome is a syndrome that needs to be, and can be, avoided, especially by father when his contact with children is limited by outside work.

An understanding of the stages of development is paramount if father is going to be more involved in the development of the child. Such a knowledge allows the father

(a) To form real expectations of his child
(b) To better guide/discipline his child in terms of the child's understanding
(c) To still feel in control of relating to his child. No one is telling him how to raise his child. However, the raw material upon which sound decisions can be made is provided.

The numerous parent education programmes that are now available (Dinkmeyer, 1976; Gordon, 1970; Patterson, 1981), as well as the number of books written on child development, some especially for fathers (Dodson, 1974) attest to the fact that this information is no longer seen as too highbrow, for professionals only, commonsense or, worse still, irrelevant to parenting.

One aspect of child development that is of particular importance to fathers is the emotional development of the child. If fathers can become at home with their feelings, then they become good models not only of how fathers behave, but how to handle emotion as a child. Too often, because fathers are not comfortable with feelings, they punish or suppress feelings in their children. If father of the future can learn to accept his, and his children's feelings, then he can become a good deal more unencumbered emotionally than he is now.

A NEW ERA IN PARENTING

A possible guide to the future of parenting and, therefore, father's future, is provided by Lloyd DeMause, editor of *History of Childhood*. DeMause (1975) outlines five modes of parenting that represent a historical progression of the parent/child interaction. They are: The Infanticide Mode, The Abandonment Mode, Intrusive Mode, Socialisation Mode, and the Helping Mode. It is the last two modes that are of special interest. According to DeMause, the socialisation mode, which is still with us to a large extent, consists of imposing a code of behaviour upon children by parents, thereby making sure they fit in with social expectations. His alternative is the helping mode which requires not only a good deal of commitment to the child, but a commitment of the father to the mother on an equal basis. Such a mode is similar to Cook's (1980) trusting, co-operative approach, except that DeMause may go a little further in suggesting little correcting of behaviour is done, if any is done at all. Not many families have tried such a mode, although the ones that have tried, seem to have found it successful.

IN SUMMARY

By looking at father and his role in the development of his child in three stages - father of the past, present, and future - a pattern begins to emerge. Father of the past had a very clearly defined role. However, this role did not take into account the emotional well-being. The result was that all three parties, father, mother and child, lost out (especially the mother and child).

Father of the present evolved out of social changes that struck at the power hold father of the past had over his family. Such social changes gave the mother much more self determination. The father, however, became confused about his role. The obvious differences between the mother's and father's progress under these social changes may explain the climbing divorce rate. Suffice to say the child continues to lose out if father of the present is not sure where he fits in.

Father of the future has a choice. He can become a total nonentity, which would be one logical conclusion of the above pattern, and so father has no role in the development of his child. The other logical conclusion of the pattern is for father to invest more of himself in the family on an equal basis, such that all parties have needs met adequately, and father becomes a very important contributor to the development of his child. As mentioned, finding father a special area to take over (e.g., sex role development, socialisation, head of the household, or disciplinarian) does not help. Father needs a definition of his role certainly, but one that gives him the opportunity to fully share in all aspects of his child's growth.

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